

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

HEREWITH FULL TEXT LESLIE H. GELB BYLINER PAGE 2 TUESDAY,
FEBRUARY 26, 1974 (DELAYED) NEW YORK TIMES HEADED "U.S.
EXPERTS ON CHINA ARE DEBATING THE MEANING OF THE NEW
TURBULENCE THERE":

WASHINGTON, FEB. 25 -- OFFICIAL AMERICAN CHINA
WATCHERS ARE GOING THROUGH A FAMILIAR DEBATE ABOUT THE
MEANING OF THE CURRENT TURBULENCE IN CHINA--ONLY THIS TIME
THEY ARE TRYING TO KEEP IT SECRET.

ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL HERE, THE SUBSTANCE OF THE DIS-
PUTE SEEMS TO CENTER ON THREE QUESTIONS:

ARE THE LATEST UPHEAVALS BEING ORCHESTRATED BY CHAIR-
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MAN MAO TSE-TUNG AGAINST PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI, OR BY BOTH

AGAINST MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS?

IF CHAIRMAN MAO AND PREMIER CHOU ARE IN CHARGE NOW,
CAN THEY MAINTAIN THEIR CONTROL?

WHAT WILL BE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICAN-CHINESE
RELATIONS?

A MATTER OF DEGREE:

ACCORDING TO BOTH OFFICIAL AND NONGOVERNMENTAL
SOURCES, NO ONE IN THE GOVERNMENT IS ARGUING THAT THE
CURRENT "REVOLUTION" WILL DEVELOP INTO ANOTHER CULTURAL
REVOLUTION--THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, 1965-69, RESULTED IN
GREAT INTERNAL DISRUPTIONS IN CHINA--BUT THE ARGUMENT,
AMONG EXPERTS REDUCED TO GRASPING AT SHREDS OF EVIDENCE
AND GUESSING, IS OVER THE DEGREE OF DISRUPTION. AS ONE
OFFICIAL PUT IT, "KREMLINOLOGISTS ARE PRACTICALLY
SCIENTISTS, COMPARED WITH PEOPLE IN THE PROFESSION OF
WATCHING CHINA."

IN THE YEARS BEFORE JULY, 1971, WHEN HENRY A.
KISSINGER MADE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE LEADERS IN PEKING,
OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL CHINA WATCHERS WERE EAGER TO
SHARE THEIR ANALYSES OF WHO WAS AND WAS NOT STANDING
NEXT TO CHAIRMAN MAO IN PHOTOGRAPHS OR WHETHER THE LATEST
ATTACK ON "DECADENT WESTERN ART" WAS AIMED AT MOSCOW OR
HOLLYWOOD.

NOW THERE IS GREAT RELUCTANCE ON THE PART OF AMERICAN
GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON CHINA TO MAKE PUBLIC THEIR
DIFFERENCES OVER WHAT IS HAPPENING. CONVERSATION AFTER
CONVERSATION IS PUT "OFF THE RECORD."

THE REASON GIVEN FOR INSISTING ON CONFIDENTIALITY
WHEN DISCUSSING MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE IS CONCERN OVER
JEOPARDIZING RELATIONS. "THE CHINESE ARE VERY SENSITIVE
ABOUT OUR SPECULATING PUBLICLY ON THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS,"
AN OFFICIAL EXPLAINED. SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER,
ACCORDING TO ONE ACCOUNT, GAVE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS TO THE
SPECIALISTS TO "SHUT UP."

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THE MATTER WOULD NORMALLY HAVE RESTED THERE, WITH THE
USUAL DIFFERENCES IN POINTS OF VIEW AMONG EXPERTS DOING
THEIR JOBS, EXCEPT THAT THE DIFFERENCES WERE LINKED TO
A BUREAUCRATIC FIGHT.

ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS ON THE PERIPHERY OF THE
SUBJECT, THE UNITED STATES LIAISON OFFICE IN PEKING

HEADED BY AMBASSADOR DAVID K. E. BRUCE AND A TEAM OF SENIOR SPECIALISTS, HAS QUARRELED OVER INTERPRETATIONS WITH A JUNIOR BUT HIGHLY REGARDED GROUP OF SPECIALISTS IN THE UNITED STATES CONSULATE GENERAL IN HONG KONG.

THE LIAISON OFFICE WAS ESTABLISHED LAST YEAR AS A STEP TOWARD FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS; THE CONSULATE HAD LONG BEEN THE PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF AMERICAN INFORMATION

ABOUT CHINA.

AMBASSADOR BRUCE'S TEAM OF EXPERTS, THE OFFICIALS SAID, WERE TELLING WASHINGTON THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO GREAT SENSE OF URGENCY OVER THE LATEST ROUND OF PUBLIC EXCORIATIONS WHILE THE CONSULATE EXPERTS WERE SAYING THAT MATTERS WERE MORE SERIOUS.

'PERMANENT REVOLUTION':

IN SIMPLIFIED FORM, THE LIAISON OFFICE WAS SAYING THAT THE UPHEAVALS WERE ANOTHER EXPRESSION OF CHAIRMAN MAO'S CONCEPT OF "PERMANENT REVOLUTION"--THE NEED TO STIR THINGS UP CONSTANTLY SO THAT OFFICEHOLDERS AND THE PEOPLE DO NOT GET SET IN THEIR WAYS. CHAIRMAN MAO AND PREMIER CHOU, THE AMERICANS IN PEKING MAINTAINED, ARE STAGING THE DRAMA IN PART TO REASSERT AUTHORITY OVER THE MILITARY AND COULD CONTROL IT. THE LIAISON OFFICE DID NOT EXPECT MUCH OF AN IMPACT ON RELATIONS WITH WASHINGTON OR A CHANGE IN RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW.

IN SIMILARLY SIMPLIFIED FORM, THE CONSULATE GENERAL WAS SAYING THAT CHAIRMAN MAO MIGHT HAVE STARTED IT, BUT THAT A GROUP KNOWN AS "THE SHANGHAI RADICALS" MIGHT BE USING THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE AT PREMIER CHOU'S CONTROL

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OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY BUREAUCRACY AND THAT MILITARY MEN MIGHT BE USING IT TO BOLSTER THEIR AUTHORITY IN THE PROVINCES. THE CONSULATE PEOPLE EXPECTED NEGATIVE IMPACT ON RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES.

MOST OF THE INTELLIGENCE AND STATE DEPARTMENT EXPERTS, THE WASHINGTON SOURCE MAINTAINED, HAVE SIDED WITH THE LIAISON OFFICE IN WHAT WAS "MORE OR LESS" A DEBATE. THE DEBATE WAS RESTRAINED UNTIL SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, WHEN ARTICLES STARTED APPEARING ON "THE NEW REVOLUTION."

ACCORDING TO SOME OF THE OFFICIAL SOURCES, THESE ARTICLES--THOUGH OFTEN PRINTED WITHOUT DATELINE--BORE A CLOSE RESEMBLANCE TO THE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SPECIALISTS IN HONG KONG. THE LIAISON OFFICE STAFF, THE SOURCE

CONTINUED, FELT THAT THIS WAS "DIRTY POOL," ASSERTING THAT THE CONSULATE WAS TRYING TO MAKE AN INTERNAL DIFFERENCE INTO A PUBLIC DISPUTE.

TWO OFFICIALS ON THE PERIPHERY OF CHINA AFFAIRS MAINTAIN THAT THE LIAISON OFFICE THEN SUCCEEDED IN GETTING WASHINGTON TO ORDER CONSULATE PERSONNEL TO CEASE HAVING CONTACT WITH THE PRESS. A THIRD OFFICIAL DENIES THIS.

IN THE MEANTIME, THE ISSUES CONTINUE TO BE DEBATED IN THE GOVERNMENT, WITH THE FOCUS ON TWO FURTHER QUESTIONS.

FIRST, WILL THE REGIONAL MILITARY COMMANDERS BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND PARTY FUNCTIONS THEY TOOK OVER DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION OR WILL PREMIER CHOU WREST THESE NONMILITARY DUTIES BACK TO THE PARTY BUREAUCRACY?

SECOND, WHEN WILL HUANG CHEN, HEAD OF THE CHINESE LIAISON OFFICE IN THE UNITED STATES, RETURN TO HIS POST? MR. HUANG LEFT WASHINGTON AT THE END OF NOVEMBER AND HAS BEEN IN CHINA SINCE. HIS STATUS IS REGARDED AS AN IMPORTANT SIGN WHETHER PEKING IS READY FOR FURTHER DIPLOMATIC DEALINGS.

TWO WEEKS AGO AMBASSADOR BRUCE DEPARTED FROM PEKING
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ON WHAT THE WHITE HOUSE DESCRIBED AS A EUROPEAN ASSIGNMENT FOR THE PRESIDENT. THOSE OFFICIALS WHO WOULD SPEAK ABOUT THE MATTER INSISTED THAT HIS DEPARTURE WAS STRICTLY FOR THE STATED REASONS AND HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ANY PENDING CHANGES IN AMERICAN POLICY OR MR. HUANG'S ABSENCE FROM WASHINGTON. "BUT MAYBE," ONE OFFICIAL SPECULATED, "CHOU EN-LAI SUGGESTED TO BRUCE THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO TRAVEL." (END TEXT) CASEY

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